

To: Higuchi, Dean[Higuchi.Dean@epa.gov]
From: Dean Higuchi
Sent: Thur 8/13/2015 8:18:18 PM
Subject: EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy in Farmington, NM Statement, Photos & Audio

CONTACT:
press@epa.gov
(970) 812-3351

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 13, 2015

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy in Farmington, NM Statement, Photos & Audio

Today, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy began her day with a meeting with Navajo Nation President Begaye and his leadership team. This included a tour through the Navajo Nation and survey of the San Juan River.

McCarthy also visited the Farmington, NM, Incident Command Post and hosted a press availability. She is meeting with mayors, officials from the San Juan Water Commission, and visiting the Aztec Emergency Response Center.

Audio: Audio from EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's remarks and press conference at the Animas River Hike and Bike Trail in Farmington, NM on response efforts relating to the release of waste water from Gold King Mine.

<http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine/audio-administrator-mccarthys-press-conference-farmington-nm-8132015>

Photos & Tweets: <https://twitter.com/EPA/status/631917284173475840> and
<https://twitter.com/EPA/status/631917622485995520>

At 11:20 AM MT, Administrator held a press briefing at the Animas River Hike and Bike Trail in Farmington, NM. The following remarks can be attributed to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy:

The agency and community are making significant steps forward in the Farmington, NM area. A significant positive step was announced yesterday that showed that water quality for the Animas River from the Silverton, Colo. area to the Durango municipal water intake has returned to pre-event water quality levels. These results are based on validated sampling data collected from Aug. 5 to Aug. 9, 2015.

We are committed to helping the people throughout the Four Corner Regions who rely on these rivers for their drinking water, irrigation water and recreation. We know how important it is to them. We have stood up a Unified Command Center in Farmington and Durango, as well as the Emergency Operations Center at EPA headquarters in DC to ensure a seamless coordinated response in collaboration with local, state and federal officials.

In New Mexico – we will have new data soon and we will put it in context for local decision makers, so they can make the most informed decisions regarding the on-going use of water resources.

Regarding irrigation, EPA issued a \$500,000 work assignment on Monday for the delivery of water for irrigation and livestock in New Mexico. This service was previously being provided by San Juan County, NM and we are making deliveries. We understand the importance of the irrigation systems and are providing data to local jurisdictions to make informed decisions.

EPA is here to take responsibility, we are seeing the river restoring itself and we are working through issues to ensure that it is cleaned up. We are in this for the long haul.

For additional information on the response to the Gold King Mine release www.epa.gov/goldkingmine